

**U.S. Department of the Interior  
Bureau of Land Management  
White River Field Office  
220 E Market St  
Meeker, CO 81641**

## **DETERMINATION OF NEPA ADEQUACY (DNA)**

NUMBER: DOI-BLM-CO-110-2011-0134-DNA

PROJECT NAME: Morapos Sheep Company Permit Issuance

LEGAL DESCRIPTION:

APPLICANT: Morapos Sheep Company

ISSUES AND CONCERNS:

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION: In March 2011, the White River Field Office (WRFO) received an application for a grazing preference transfer on Pasture 8 of the Artesia (06308) allotment to Red Wash Ranch LLC. The Artesia allotment is permitted for sheep use by Morapos Sheep Company, but Pasture 8 is inaccessible to Morapos Sheep Company due to fenced private lands blocking access. This has resulted in non-use of the pasture for eight years therefore resulting in the transfer of Pasture 8. The remaining seven pastures of the allotment remained with Morapos Sheep Company. The Proposed Action is for the issuance of Morapos Sheep Company's new grazing permit without the AUMs associated with Pasture 8. Morapos Sheep Co. permit was renewed in 2008 for a period of 10 years, and forage allocation for each of the pastures was analyzed in that document. There is no rotation or allotment management plan (AMP) that was developed that requires the use of Pasture 8 in the previous analysis. To compensate for the loss of AUMs in Pasture 8, a reduction in sheep numbers from 4,321 to 3,990 is required. Morapos Sheep Company has been taking non-use on Pasture 8 for several seasons due to the lack of access to the pasture, and the new permit will reflect the reduction in numbers due to lack of use in the pasture. The new permit is outlined in Table 1 below.

**Table 1: Grazing Permit for Morapos Sheep Company**

PROPOSED GRAZING SCHEDULE "A" Year 1 FOR MORAPOS SHEEP COMPANY									
Allotment			Livestock		Grazing Period		%PL	Type Use	Total AUM's
Number	Name	Pasture	Number	Kind	Begin	End			
6314	Raven Park	N/A	1400	Sheep	11/20	2/28	100	Active	930
			1400	Sheep	3/1	4/6	100	Active	341

6603	Little Toms Draw	Tom Little	1700	Sheep	4/15	5/31	80	Active	525
		Wray Gulch	1000	Sheep	4/15	5/31	80	Active	309
		Smizer	1000	Sheep	11/1	11/30	80	Active	197
6312	Raven Ridge	N/A	1200	Sheep	11/20	2/28	100	Active	797
6308	Artesia	Winter Use	3990*	Sheep	12/1	2/28	100	Active	2361
			3990*	Sheep	3/1	4/1	100	Active	840
		Crested North	700	Sheep	4/1	5/20	100	Active	230

PROPOSED GRAZING SCHEDULE "A" Year 2 FOR MORAPOS SHEEP COMPANY									
Allotment			Livestock		Grazing Period		%PL	Type Use	Total AUM's
Number	Name	Pasture	Number	Kind	Begin	End			
6314	Raven Park	N/A	1400	Sheep	11/20	2/28	100	Active	930
			1400	Sheep	3/1	4/6	100	Active	341
6603	Little Toms Draw	Tom Little	1700	Sheep	4/15	5/31	80	Active	525
		Wray Gulch	1000	Sheep	11/1	11/30	80	Active	197
		Smizer	1000	Sheep	4/15	5/31	80	Active	309
6312	Raven Ridge	N/A	1200	Sheep	11/20	2/28	100	Active	797
6308	Artesia	Winter Use	3990*	Sheep	12/1	2/28	100	Active	2361
			3990*	Sheep	3/1	4/1	100	Active	840
		Crested South	700	Sheep	4/1	5/20	100	Active	230

PROPOSED GRAZING SCHEDULE "A" Year 3 FOR MORAPOS SHEEP COMPANY									
Allotment			Livestock		Grazing Period		%PL	Type Use	Total AUM's
Number	Name	Pasture	Number	Kind	Begin	End			
6314	Raven Park	N/A	1400	Sheep	11/20	2/28	100	Active	930
			1400	Sheep	3/1	4/6	100	Active	341
6603	Little Toms Draw	Tom Little	1700	Sheep	11/1	11/30	80	Active	335
		Wray Gulch	1000	Sheep	4/15	5/31	80	Active	309
		Smizer	1000	Sheep	4/15	5/31	80	Active	309
6312	Raven Ridge	N/A	1200	Sheep	11/20	2/28	100	Active	797
6308	Artesia	Winter Use	3990*	Sheep	12/1	2/28	100	Active	2,361
			3990*	Sheep	3/1	4/1	100	Active	840
		Crested North	700	Sheep	4/1	5/20	100	Active	230
		Crested South	700	Sheep	4/1	5/20	100	Active	230
Total									6,682

\*Reduction in sheep numbers from 4,321 to 3,990 to compensate for loss of Pasture 8

#### LAND USE PLAN (LUP) CONFORMANCE REVIEW:

Name of Plan: White River Record of Decision and Approved Resource Management Plan (ROD/RMP).

Date Approved: July 1, 1997

  X   The Proposed Action is in conformance with the LUP because it is specifically provided for in the following LUP decision(s):

Decision Number/Page: 2-22

Decision Language: "Maintain or enhance a healthy rangeland vegetative composition and species diversity, capable of supplying forage at a sustained yield to meet the demand for livestock grazing."

## REVIEW OF EXISTING NEPA DOCUMENTS:

List by name and date all existing NEPA documents that cover the proposed action.

Name of Document: White River Resource Area Proposed Resource Management Plan and Final Environmental Impact Statement (PRMP/FEIS).

Date Approved: July 1, 1997

Name of Document: Morapos Sheep Grazing Permit Renewal (CO-110-2007-154-EA)

Date Approved: October 17, 2008

## NEPA ADEQUACY CRITERIA:

1. Is the new proposed action a feature of, or essentially similar to, an alternative analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? Is the project within the same analysis area, or if the project location is different, are the geographic and resource conditions sufficiently similar to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s)? If there are differences, can you explain why they are not substantial?

*Documentation of answer and explanation:* Yes. The Proposed Action is to issue a permit to graze livestock under the same schedules and terms and conditions and in the same allotments as analyzed in the 2007 environmental assessment document listed above. The permitted AUMs for the seven pastures of the Artesia allotment are the same as analyzed in that document.

2. Is the range of alternatives analyzed in the existing NEPA document(s) appropriate with respect to the new proposed action, given current environmental concerns, interests, and resource values?

*Documentation of answer and explanation:* Three alternatives were analyzed (proposed action, the no action alternative, and the no grazing alternative) covering a reasonable range of alternatives (CO-110-2007-0154EA). No reasons were identified to analyze additional alternatives, and these alternatives are considered to be adequate and valid for the proposed action.

3. Is the existing analysis valid in light of any new information or circumstances (such as, rangeland health standard assessment, recent endangered species listings, updated lists of BLM-sensitive species)? Can you reasonably conclude that new information and new circumstances would not substantially change the analysis of the new proposed action?

*Documentation of answer and explanation:* Yes, the existing analysis remains valid and there is no new information or circumstances that would change the analysis of the Proposed Action.

4. Are the direct, indirect, and cumulative effects that would result from implementation of the new proposed action similar (both quantitatively and qualitatively) to those analyzed in the existing NEPA document?

*Documentation of answer and explanation:* Yes, the direct and indirect impacts remain unchanged from those identified and analyzed in the White River ROD/RMP and in the site specific analysis in CO-110-2007-154-EA.

5. Are the public involvement and interagency review associated with existing NEPA document(s) adequate for the current proposed action?

*Documentation of answer and explanation:* Yes, public involvement conducted for the White River ROD/RMP and BLM-CO-110-2007-154-EA is adequate for issuance of this grazing permit.

#### INTERDISCIPLINARY REVIEW:

The proposed action was presented to, and reviewed by the White River Field Office interdisciplinary team on July 7, 2011. A list of resource specialists who participated in this review is available upon request from the White River Field Office.

#### REMARKS:

*Cultural Resources:* There are no cultural-related issues or concerns associated with the Proposed Action. Cultural issues were adequately addressed in the original environmental assessment. As stated in the CO-110-2007-154-EA, areas of livestock concentration have to be surveyed before the 10 year permit term is up. There are six concentration areas on the Artesia Allotment (06308) totaling approximately 36 acres that are still required to be surveyed. One site in Artesia, 5RB2962, has to be visited to assess potential livestock impacts. No livestock concentrations areas exist on the Raven Ridge Allotment (06312). There are three concentration areas on the Raven Park Allotment (06314) totaling approximately 18 acres that are still required to be surveyed. There are 20 concentration areas on the Little Toms Draw Allotment (06603) totaling approximately 120 acres that are still required to be surveyed. (KB 7/18/11)

*Native American Religious Concerns:* No known concerns. (KB 7/18/11)

*Threatened and Endangered Wildlife Species:* The proposed action is not expected to adversely influence terrestrial wildlife species. Impacts to the herbaceous understory will not be affected differently from what was analyzed in the last grazing permit renewal. (LRB 06/21/11)

*Threatened and Endangered Plant Species:* All potential impacts were analyzed in the original permit application. Since this reduces livestock numbers there are no special status plant species concerns associated with this proposed action. (ZMM 7/8/11)

#### MITIGATION:

1. The permittee is responsible for informing all persons who are associated with the allotment that they will be subject to prosecution for knowingly disturbing archaeological sites or for collecting artifacts. If archaeological materials are discovered as a result of operations under this authorization, the permittee must immediately contact the appropriate BLM representative.
2. Pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(g), the permittee must notify the AO, by telephone and written confirmation, immediately upon the discovery of human remains, funerary items, sacred objects, or objects of cultural patrimony. Further, pursuant to 43 CFR 10.4(c) and (d), the permittee must stop activities in the vicinity of the discovery and protect it for 30 days or until notified to proceed by the AO.
3. Cultural resource inventories will be conducted in areas of livestock concentration, before the permit is renewed, to determine if grazing activities are having a significant, adverse effect on cultural resources. There are six concentration areas on the Artesia Allotment (06308) totaling approximately 36 acres that are still required to be surveyed. One site in Artesia, 5RB2962, has to be visited to assess potential livestock impacts. No livestock concentrations areas exist on the Raven Ridge Allotment (06312). There are three concentration areas on the Raven Park Allotment (06314) totaling approximately 18 acres, that are still required to be surveyed. There are 20 concentration areas on the Little Toms Draw Allotment (06603), totaling approximately 120 acres, that are still required to be surveyed.

COMPLIANCE PLAN (optional): On-going compliance inspections and monitoring will be conducted by the BLM White River Field Office staff during and after construction. Specific mitigation developed in this document will be followed. The operator will be notified of compliance related issues in writing, and depending on the nature of the issue(s), will be provided 30 days to resolve such issues.

NAME OF PREPARER: Matthew L Dupire

NAME OF ENVIRONMENTAL COORDINATOR: Heather Sauls

DATE: August 2, 2011

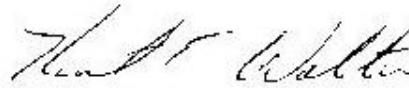
ATTACHMENTS: Figure 1: Map of the Artesia Allotment with 7 Pastures

## CONCLUSION

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Based on the review documented above, I conclude that this proposal in consort with the applied mitigation conforms to the land use plan and that the NEPA documentation previously prepared fully covers the Proposed Action and constitutes BLM's compliance with the requirements of NEPA.

SIGNATURE OF RESPONSIBLE OFFICIAL:



Field Manager

DATE SIGNED:

08/03/2011

Note: The signed Conclusion on this worksheet is part of an interim step in the BLM's internal decision process and does not constitute an appealable decision.





Figure 1: Map of the Artesia Allotment with 7 Pastures

